

NORTHWEST INDIANA

FEBRUARY 2026

# REAL PRODUCERS®

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Lisa Gaff



Agent Spotlight  
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Rising Star  
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Partner Spotlight:  
**LUKE AND  
ASHLEY SUMMERS**  
of HOMEstretch

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**WINTER EVENT  
FEBRUARY 26**

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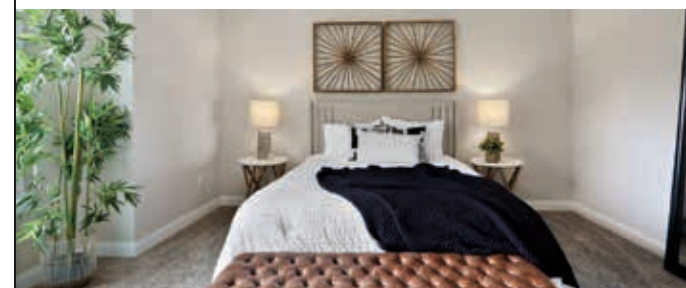


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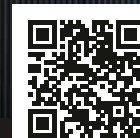


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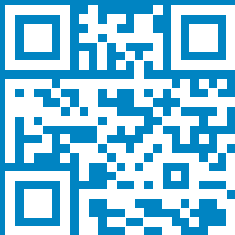


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# WELCOME TO THE TOP!

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In a world increasingly inundated with AI content and imagery, our value lies in what can't be replicated: our uniqueness and human touch.

Our publication does what AI cannot: foster genuine connection and community. Our publisher, writers, and photographers have genuine face-to-face meetings with our features. We get to know them, learn their stories, and aim to capture their genuine personality. We photograph them in their element—favorite spaces, passions, and alongside family or valued colleagues. Each story reflects real life, not a template.

Real Producers is a national brand with publications in over 140 U.S. markets. Each curates unique content that is for and about its local community. What began in Indianapolis in 2014 now has a widescale presence and national podcast, while remaining locally driven at its core.

If you are receiving this publication, congratulations and welcome! February marks the beginning of our new distribution list of 2026. Your 2025 sales have placed you among top 300 real estate agents in Northwest Indiana. Ranking so highly

out of thousands is an accomplishment in itself that testifies to your dedication and proficiency. You will receive this publication throughout 2026 as well as invitations to our quarterly networking events, where we continue to build on those irreplaceable face-to-face connections. See the FAQs page to learn more about RP.

We have recently emailed out your Top 300 Agent badge. Download your badge and share! When you post it, tag us on FB + Instagram so we can reshare. Feel free to place it on top of a headshot, use it in your email signature, and on your marketing materials and website.

Save the date for our first event of the year: the Toast to the Top of 2026 Winter Event on Thursday, February 26 from 1-3pm at Journeyman Distillery in Valparaiso! Join us for networking, live music, great food and drinks, and giveaways.

We look forward to an awesome year ahead where our mission is to connect, elevate, and inspire our local real estate community.



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**Q: Who receives this magazine?**

A: The top 300 agents in NWI based on the previous year's volume and our Preferred Partners. We update our mailing list annually to ensure RP reaches the Region's top producers.

**Q: Do agents pay for the magazine?**

A: No! The magazine is mailed FREE to agents and funded by our partners.

**Q: What kind of content will be featured?**

A: Personal, in-depth stories that highlight the people behind the production. We go beyond the numbers and showcase the personal side of the industry to inspire stronger connections.

**Q: Who are the partners?**

A: Trusted professionals who make this community possible. They are top tier in their industry; they appear in every issue, attend our events, and come highly recommended by our agents. Our goal is to build a powerhouse network of the best agents and affiliates, growing stronger together.

**Q: Does Real Producers have events?**

A: Yes! We host quarterly, invite-only events where members connect, mastermind, and build relationships at local venues. Event details are shared through the magazine, email, and social media.

**Q: What does it cost for an agent to be featured?**

A: *Nothing.* \$0, zilch, nada. We are not a pay-to-play model. We share real stories of Real Producers, and agents do not pay to be featured.

**Q: What is the process to be featured in the magazine?**

A: Everyone in the magazine has first been nominated. We spotlight professionals who are collaborative, produce top numbers, and known for strong character. Attending our events and engaging with our platform helps us get to know your story!

**Q: How can I nominate an agent?**

A: We need on your input to uncover great stories! If you know an agent who's on fire and deserving of recognition, scan the QR code to submit a nomination.



Nominate a Feature

**Q: How can I recommend a Preferred Partner?**

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# Luke & Ashley SUMMERS of HOMEstretch

When Luke and Ashley Summers opened the doors to HOMEstretch one year ago, they stepped into a space in the real estate world that many people felt — even if they couldn't quite name it. It was a need for relief. A need for guidance. A need for someone to bridge the intimidating gap between "We're selling" and "We're ready." For sellers, it's the stress of looking around a lived-in home and seeing a checklist that feels miles long. For Realtors, it's the struggle of helping sellers understand what truly moves the needle and finding reliable vendors to do quality work, fast. For the Summers, it was the perfect opportunity to take their passion for homes, preparation, and people — and turn it into a business that makes the selling process easier for everyone involved.

"We want to build a company that is authentic and makes an impact on people's lives," Luke said. "We have moved and lived in 12 different homes, and we learned that prepping a home to sell doesn't have to be stressful when you have the right plan."

Now, just one year later, Luke and Ashley are celebrating the first anniversary of HOMEstretch, a franchise that has quickly become a trusted partner for Realtors and a lifesaver for stressed-out sellers across the region. They fill a niche that the market didn't just want but genuinely needed; rather than acting as a general contractor, HOMEstretch fills a different role. They are home-prep specialists who evaluate a property through the lens of buyer perception and ROI, then coordinate the right cosmetic updates with a vetted network. The agent and seller don't have to lift a finger through the entire process. And their results are speaking for themselves: well-prepared homes consistently sell faster and for up to 30% more, a statistic that has fueled HOMEstretch's rapid success.

**A Vision Rooted in Joy, Care, and Real-World Need**  
The Summers didn't stumble into this business. They stepped into it intentionally, with a shared love for homes and a clear understanding

of what it takes to make a property shine on the market. Luke's background paired naturally with Ashley's eye for detail and her ability to see a space's potential. Together, they realized they weren't just capable of fixing up homes—they could remove the stress that so often overwhelms sellers.

"We kept hearing the same thing," Ashley explained. "People wanted to sell, but they didn't know where to start. Realtors were trying to guide them, but they aren't general contractors. There was this gap, and we knew we could fill it."

And HOMEstretch emerged as a solution to that gap.

"This industry can be messy; slow responses, missed expectations, and unclear communication. We saw an opportunity to disrupt it by doing what we do best: deliver a five-star, high-communication experience with speed and professionalism. The impact is real. Realtors and homeowners get a smoother process and more value from their biggest asset, so for us, it was a no-brainer," Luke said.

**The Hybrid Model: A Game-Changer in Home Preparation**  
What sets HOMEstretch apart is that most home service providers solve one isolated

problem, like paint, flooring, cleaning, or landscaping. They leave the coordination (and the stress) on the seller or agent. HOMEstretch is different: they're a one-stop shop for the Big 5, painting, flooring, landscaping, cleaning, and junk removal, with a team that guides the plan, runs the timeline, and manages quality and communication end-to-end.

This solves a problem many sellers face: the overwhelming responsibility of organizing multiple vendors, all while trying to pack, plan, and prepare for their next chapter. HOMEstretch eliminates that pressure, and they do it quickly. HOMEstretch can walk the property the same day or next, send the proposal within 24 hours, and begin work within 3-5 days after signing (averaging 2.8 days this year).

"We're here so sellers don't have to juggle ten different calls, schedules, or estimates," Luke says. "We manage the process so the home is market-ready and the seller feels supported the entire way."

The Summers have also become invaluable partners to Realtors. Agents know that a home requiring updates can suffer on the market, attracting lower offers or sitting unsold. With

## Celebrating One Year of HOMEstretch:

How **Luke & Ashley Summers** Built a Stress-Free, Market-Ready Home Prep Experience





“  
**We’re not  
just prepping  
houses.**  
We’re helping people  
move into their next  
chapter with more  
ease and more  
financial confidence.”

HOMEstretch in their corner, Realtors can focus on what they do best—marketing and negotiating—while Luke and Ashley handle the prep work that ensures every listing makes its strongest first impression.

#### **Why Preparation Matters: A 30% Difference**

In today’s competitive market, presentation is everything. Buyers want move-in-ready homes, and they’re willing to pay for them. According to industry research and HOMEstretch’s own client experience, homes that undergo proper preparation—cleaning, light repairs, cosmetic updates,, and exterior polish—can sell for 30% more than comparable homes listed as-is.

That number isn’t just impressive—it’s life-changing. Sellers earn more, Realtors secure stronger comps in their markets, and buyers get homes they can fall in love with immediately.

HOMEstretch has embraced this reality from day one. Their mission isn’t just to “fix up” homes; it’s to make listings shine—to help sellers maximize their equity while making the entire process simpler and far less stressful.



“If a seller takes the initiative and, before they list their home, they create a turnkey, move-in ready experience for the next homeowner, they have a competitive advantage,” Luke said. “That will have an impact on the price they list the home at, and it should outperform the comps on the market.”

#### **A First Year Filled With Growth, Impact, and Community**

In just twelve months, HOMEstretch has made an impressive mark on Northwest Indiana. The Summers have completed dozens of home-prep projects, each one tailored to the individual needs of the homeowner and the market standards of the neighborhood. Their team of contractors has grown, their partnerships with Realtors have strengthened, and word of mouth has traveled fast.

The best part? Luke and Ashley remain as hands-on today as they were on day one. They personally walk each property, guide homeowners through the recommended improvements, and stay involved until the very last detail is complete. Their reputation for reliability, integrity, and communication has become a defining feature of the HOMEstretch brand.

“We’re not just prepping houses,” Ashley says. “We’re helping people move into their next chapter with more ease and more financial confidence. That’s what makes this work meaningful.”

#### **Looking Ahead: Expanding the Vision**

As HOMEstretch enters its second year, Luke and Ashley have big plans. They aim to expand their contractor network, take on more Realtor partnerships, and

continue refining the system that has made their first year such a success. Their long-term vision is to make HOMEstretch the go-to name in market-ready home preparation—a trusted, convenient, and cost-effective option for anyone selling a home.

But even with growth on the horizon, their core mission remains unchanged: to create a process that removes stress, adds value, and makes homes shine.

Luke and Ashley Summers have taken their joy for homes and transformed it into a business that helps homeowners thrive. In just one year, HOMEstretch has proven that preparation isn’t just a step in the selling process—it’s the secret to maximizing value. As they celebrate their first anniversary, one thing is clear: HOMEstretch is just getting started.





# 2025

## BY THE NUMBERS

Here's what the Top 300 Agents in NWI sold in 2025



25%

NEW AGENTS TO THE TOP 300

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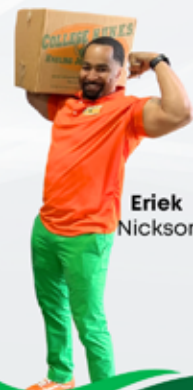
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# Erika Segrest

OF MCCOLLY REAL ESTATE

## BREAKING Chains, BUILDING Success

BY GIAVONNI  
DOWNING  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY MELINDA  
NICOLE  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Some people chase success; others answer a calling. Erika Segrest belongs firmly in the latter.

Today, she is a top-producing Realtor in Northwest Indiana, a Rookie of the Year honoree who closed nearly \$3 million in her first 12 months in real estate. She negotiates contracts with confidence, advocates fiercely for her clients, and shows up with calm authority in moments that matter. But long before the numbers, before the accolades, before the license, there was faith steady and often tested.

“I didn’t even have expectations when I started,” Segrest says. “I just said, ‘Lord, I’m going to step out on faith. I don’t know where this is going to take me, but this is where You led me.’”

That posture, faith over fear, has followed her across every chapter of her life.

Born and raised in Northwest Indiana, Segrest grew up in humble circumstances, surrounded by love but limited resources. Her parents were teenagers, and her grandmother largely raised her alongside young aunts and uncles. “We didn’t have a lot,” she says, “but we had an abundance of love.” It was that love—paired with the example of relentless, resilient women—that quietly built the woman she would become.

Her grandmother’s story still echoes in her own: a teenage girl leaving Puerto Rico for New York,



not speaking English, raising four children alone, working two and three jobs because survival required it. Strength was inherited, not optional.

Even as a child, she understood that love could sustain you, but vision would move you forward.

Segrest became independent early, living on her own by age 18. She developed a work ethic that would carry her through every season of her life. She also learned what not to do. Having witnessed generational struggles, including addiction and economic

hardship, she made a conscious decision to break cycles rather than repeat them. “I saw exactly what I didn’t want,” she reflects. “And I chose something different.”

That choice made her a chain breaker.

The pattern of people recognizing her gifts before she could would repeat itself throughout her life. In corporate roles, she earned promotions she didn’t ask for. In leadership moments she felt unprepared for, she rose anyway. When resentment followed success, she learned to



**“I worked really hard.**

**Eventually, the same people who shut me out came back and said they couldn’t have done what I did.”**

let her work speak for itself. “I worked really hard,” she recalls. “Eventually, the same people who shut me out came back and said they couldn’t have done what I did.”

Her love for professionalism and structure led her to a career as a paralegal. While working full-time and raising a family, she returned to school, pushing through exhaustion, self-doubt, and sacrifice, and graduated magna cum laude.

Her husband, Mark, saw something in her long before she saw it herself. “He always believed in me,” she says. After years of encouragement, prayer, and inner wrestling, the pieces finally aligned. When Segrest entered real estate, she didn’t tiptoe; she committed.



**“It felt like everything I had done up until that point was preparing me for this.”**

She attended real estate school at night while working full-time, studied relentlessly, passed her exams on the first try, and graduated from her brokerage’s mentorship program in just five months. “It felt like everything I had done up until that point was preparing me for this,” she says. Despite her success, Segrest remains grounded. An introvert by nature, she has learned how to step forward as an advocate for her clients, becoming their

voice in negotiations, their calm in chaos, and their guide. “I feel like I’m doing God’s work,” she says. “Helping people achieve the American Dream matters.”

At home, success sounds like laughter, busy schedules, and intentional boundaries. Segrest is a wife and mother to three teenagers, balancing careers, sports, and family rhythms with care. She protects time. She celebrates wins.

“My husband and I celebrate every win,” she says. “Big or small. A closing, a referral, even someone saying, ‘When I’m ready, you’re my Realtor.’ Gratitude keeps us grounded.”

That gratitude extends beyond her business. Segrest supports organizations like Toys for Tots, Angel Tree, and the Salvation Army, which once supported her own family. “If it weren’t for those programs,” she says, “there wouldn’t have been gifts under my tree growing up.”

Today, Segrest is no longer operating in survival mode. “My eyes are open now,” she says. “Fear doesn’t hold me back anymore.” Competitive by nature, she once avoided opportunities out of fear of failing. Now she understands that every experience is a lesson.

“If you fully commit,” she advises new agents, “and you show up even when it feels like nothing is happening, it will pay off.”

Anchored in faith, strengthened by love, and driven by purpose, Erika Segrest is more than a top-producing Realtor. She is living proof that when faith outweighs fear, you don’t just change your career, you can break chains and change the trajectory of your life.

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# CALEB LYZENGA

OF REALTY EXECUTIVES PREMIER



## CALEB LYZENGA: Built to Transform

BY GIAVONNI DOWNING  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MELINDA  
NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

**W**hile some rush to the finish line or get held up at the start, Caleb Lyzenga is a successful standout Realtor who is comfortable in the middle of transition.

Caleb has learned to excel in that in-between space where something is being taken apart so it can be rebuilt, where decisions are not yet finished, walls are open, and outcomes are still forming.

It's a posture he learned long before he became a Realtor.

Growing up in a large family rooted in construction and

rentals, Caleb's early education didn't take place solely in classrooms. It happened on job sites, inside half-finished houses, and alongside work that required patience, precision, and follow-through. In his world, nothing stayed the same for long.

"Leave a place better than you found it," he says.

With five brothers and three sisters, work was a family language. The Christian school tuition had to be paid. Rentals had to be maintained. Hands were needed. Caleb learned discipline before he learned comfort, guided



“  
I’M  
HERE  
TO  
GUIDE.  
”

by a hard-working father who owned a construction company and passed down practical knowledge earned on job sites, and by a compassionate mother whose work as a nurse modeled care, patience, and service. His parents were always helping others, and through their example, they taught Caleb and all of his siblings valuable life lessons about responsibility, humility, and serving beyond themselves.

“Work came first,” Caleb says of his childhood, “but not as punishment, as preparation.”

That foundation would quietly shape every decision that followed.

After high school, he tried college. He took business classes and tried a traditional path, but it didn’t work for him. Sitting still, waiting for permission, and delaying momentum felt disconnected from who he already was. “I just wanted to start making money and start building,” he admits.

Choosing labor over lectures, Caleb returned full-time to construction and property work alongside his family, gaining firsthand experience most people don’t acquire until much later. He learned how houses function, how problems reveal themselves, and how patience often matters more than speed.

At 18, he bought his first rental property with help from his grandparents and paid them back within two years.

Real estate was already in his hands long before it was in his title.

When Caleb officially entered real estate in 2019, the transition was seamless. He started part-time while still working construction,



Caleb's whole family at his youngest sister's wedding. Photo courtesy of Dustin Hibbler Photo & Video

learning the business slowly and intentionally. Then, just weeks before the world shut down during COVID, he made a decisive move: he went all in.

What followed was rapid learning under pressure, multiple offers, quick decisions, and constant problem-solving. That early baptism by fire shaped the agent he is today, one who has navigated both booming and shifting markets with steadiness and perspective. Years later, as conditions normalized, he gained a deeper understanding. Momentum comes and goes, but timing matters more than speed.

That belief threads through every part of his life.

He sees it in real estate. “Rushing the wrong decision can cost far more than waiting for the right one,” Caleb admits. He sees it in his investment work, where living with unfinished projects has taught him to trust transformation, even when it’s uncomfortable.

And eventually, within himself, he felt the need for transformation.

According to Caleb, a single photo taken at the airport changed everything. “I didn’t like what I saw,” he says simply. “I felt tired, unhealthy, and disconnected from my own energy. Caleb recognized a truth he couldn’t ignore: something needed to change.

He committed. He changed his diet and went to the gym. He built a routine where there had been inconsistency. Slowly and deliberately, he transformed both physically and mentally. He lost more than 65 pounds and gained focus.

He describes the year after weight loss. “This has been my most successful year,” he says. “More closings, more confidence, and an enhanced sense of purpose.”

The transformation reinforced what he already knew: sustained change doesn’t happen overnight; it happens through daily decisions.

Today, Caleb is licensed in both Indiana and Illinois, working with buyers, sellers, investors, and families navigating major transitions. He’s known for his calm presence, great problem-

solving skills, and relational approach. He doesn’t rush people. He doesn’t force outcomes. “I’m here to guide,” he says.

Much of his business comes from referrals, from tenants he helped become homeowners, from clients who trusted him in stressful moments, and from relationships built over time. He remains connected to his roots, still flipping properties, still working alongside family, but carving a path distinctly his own.

Service anchors his life outside of work as well. He volunteers regularly, serves on local boards, and stays invested in the community that raised him. Faith constantly guides his steps, just as it always has. Caleb gives all glory to God.

Caleb doesn’t chase titles or visibility. In real estate, as in life, he understands something essential: Knowing when to move matters as much as knowing how. And when the moment comes, he’s ready.

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# Lisa GAFF

of White Hat  
Realty Group



BY GIAVONNI DOWNING  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MELINDA  
NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

## FAITHFUL TO THE WORK: *Lisa Gaff's Journey of Service, Stewardship, and Leadership*

Lisa Gaff never set out to build a brokerage; she set out to be faithful.

Faithful to her family. Faithful to the season she was in. Faithful to the quiet nudges that kept asking her to step forward, sometimes gently, sometimes insistently. Before she was leading agents or overseeing millions in production, she was learning to listen, to serve, and to trust God for instruction.

Lisa embarked on a journey from the stylist's chair to the closing table first as a hairstylist, then as a stay-at-home mother, and eventually as the owner of a brokerage that helps agents change their lives and reach their goals. She's carried her work ethic, discipline, and intuition along the way.

Her story doesn't unfold in straight lines.

It unfolds in rich, colorful layers.

Lisa has a strong track record of rising. Early on, she climbed her way to a master stylist, driven by goals, excellence, and a commitment to service that consistently placed her at the top. She was top in sales, not because she pushed product, but because she understood something deeper.

"It was never just about hair," she says. "I was counseling clients, managing their emotions, and helping them feel seen and confident."

She learned early that people don't just come in for a service; they come in carrying stories, stress, and unspoken needs.

What she was really doing was preparing for real estate long before she knew it.

As a stylist, she learned how to read people, guide decisions, and create trust in moments of vulnerability. Those same skills would later define her success as a Realtor and emerging broker. Buying or selling a home, she learned, isn't transactional; it's emotional.

"Buying a home is one of the most emotional experiences people go through," she says. "It's about safety. It's about family."

When her husband's successful engineering career required frequent relocations, Lisa stepped into full-time motherhood. With four sons and a husband often traveling out of the country for work, she poured herself into her family. But stillness eventually turned restless.

"I loved being home," she recalls. "But I was going stir crazy."

She found herself renovating spaces, tearing out walls, watching HGTV, and praying, "God, what's next?"

The answer didn't come loudly. It came relationally.

After returning to Northwest Indiana, a conversation at Vacation Bible School confirmed what her brother-in-law had already been nudging her toward. "I really prayed about it," she says. "I wanted to make sure it was the Lord's direction."



*"I love helping agents see what's POSSIBLE."*



For Lisa, obedience has always mattered more than certainty.

When the door opened, she walked through it.

She passed the real estate exam on her first try and quickly built momentum. With deep roots in Chesterton and an expansive sphere of influence, her business grew through trust, family, friends, referrals, and relationships built over decades.

"I expected to be busy," she admits. "And I was."

During the height of the COVID market, she closed over 100 transactions in a single year. The pace was relentless. She was producing at a high level while simultaneously trying to build a team.

"We were doing everything," she says. "I brought my husband on board. It was a lot."

That season tested her capacity, her leadership, and her faith all at once.

It also exposed a hard truth: the traditional brokerage model limited how well she could serve others.

"I couldn't pay agents what they deserved," she says. "And I wanted to serve them better." The idea of opening her own brokerage felt overwhelming. "I didn't want the headache," she admits. "It was scary."

Still, she moved forward.

What followed was baptism by fire: learning systems, leadership, finances, and boundaries in real time.

Today, White Hat Realty is home to 13 agents, built intentionally around guidance, quality pay, benefits, and real support for what agents actually need in today's market. Last year, the brokerage closed over \$30 million in sales. This year, it is on track to close over \$60 million, nearly doubling year over year.

"All glory to God," Lisa says. "The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away."

She understands that scripture intimately.

There was a season of deep personal hardship. It was painful, and humbling when her husband experienced a significant career downturn just as her own success was accelerating. The role reversal was jarring.

"He went from the mountaintop to rock bottom," she shares. It nearly cost them their marriage.

"I threw myself into real estate," she says quietly. "That's how I coped."

Growth was happening, and her faith was being tested behind the scenes.

But faith carried them through, and forgiveness reshaped everything.

"When you truly forgive and refuse to go backward," she says, "God transforms the situation."



*"When you truly FORGIVE & REFUSE TO GO BACKWARD. God transforms the situation."*



That season refined her leadership and deepened her compassion.

Today, she leads with empathy forged by experience. She finds joy in blessing her agents, writing commission checks, watching confidence grow, and witnessing lives change.

"I love helping agents see what's possible," she says. "That's what it's all about."

Outside of business, service remains central. She is President of the Chesterton Women's Club, supports foster care initiatives, food pantries, organizations that help single mothers, and community programs designed simply to make children smile.

Giving back isn't a side mission; it's a responsibility she takes seriously.

At home, joy is intentional. Chickens, 21 hens, and a rooster roam her five-acre property. Meals are shared with family and laughter is constant.

"God gifted me with joy," she says. "And I like to spread it."

Success, for Lisa Gaff, isn't about perfection, though she's learned that "done is better than perfect." It's about obedience, stewardship, and impact.

For her, real estate is not just a career; it is a calling refined by fire, sustained by faith, and built to change lives.

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